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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000172

SIPDIS

STATE FOR CA/FPP

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: 24,900 Blank Passports Missing; Nigeria Immigration
Sacks 200 For Corruption

1. SUMMARY: Nigeria Immigration Service has approached Amconsul Lagos with information regarding 24,900 blank passports that have recently been discovered missing, and are now cancelled. This comes at the same time that local media outlets are reporting 200 passport adjudicators being fired due to corruption. Nigeria FPM will meet later this week with the Chief Superintendent of Immigration who is traveling to Lagos to brief on the aforementioned issues. Serial numbers of missing passports follow. END SUMMARY.

2. On February 6, 2006 the Nigeria Immigration Service updated their website with the serial numbers of 24,900 blank passports that are apparently missing and subsequently cancelled. On the same day, Chief Superintendent Tanko of Nigeria Immigration's Anti-Fraud Directorate contacted the Nigeria FPM to request a meeting for later in the week to brief on the circumstances surrounding the missing passports.

3. On the telephone, Mr. Tanko reported that they had recently discovered that thieves had broken through the wall of the vault where the passports were being stored. According to him, these thieves had gained access to a neighboring structure and used drills and torches to cut through the wall before stealing the blank passports. He says that they conducted a search of surrounding buildings but were unable to recover the passports.

4. This news comes at the same time that local media outlets are reporting the sacking of 200 out of their approximately 250 passport adjudicators due to "passport racketeering." On January 25, 2006 local papers provided coverage of a press conference where the Comptroller General of Nigerian Immigration described the sacked passport officers as "official touts." In Nigeria, the term tout refers to local gangs who use their implied influence to extract fees from people in the course of routine business.

5. Amconsul Lagos will report septel on the meeting with Mr. Tanko.

6. Serial number ranges of the 24,900 missing blank passports follow:

A4103151 - A4103650
A4081151 - A4081650
A4071651 - A4072150
A4072651 - A4073150
A4071151 - A4071650
A4067151 - A4067650
A3102190 - A3102689
A3070190 - A3070689
A3069690 - A3070189
A3103190 - A3103689
A3066690 - A3067189
A3062690 - A3063189
A3995151 - A3995650
A3296690A - A3297189A
A3269690A - A3270189A
A3268690A - A3269189A
A3268190A - A3268689A
A3267690A - A3268189A
A3267190A - A3267689A
A3266690A - A3267189A
A3266190A - A3266689A
A3265690A - A3266189A
A3265190A - A3265689A
A3264690A - A3265689A
A2986290A - A2986689A
A2979190A - A2979689A
A2975190A - A2975689A
A2971190A - A2971689A
A2970690A - A2971189A
A2966190A - A2966689A
A2965690A - A2966189A
A2957190A - A2957689A
A2953690A - A2954189A
A2952190A - A2952689A
A2941190A - A2941689A
A2938690A - A2939189A

A2935190A - A2935689A
A2934690A - A2935189A
A2934190A - A2934689A
A2928190A - A2928689A
A2919190A - A2919689A
A2914690A - A2915189A
A2910190A - A2910689A
A2905190A - A2905689A
A2901690A - A2902189A
A2901190A - A2901689A
A2886690A - A2887189A
A2882190A - A2882689A
A2877690A - A2878189A
A2873190A - A2873689A

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